



ARMY AND NAVY
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
"WITH THE COLORS"



Camp Lee, Va., ^{Sun. Sept. 1, 1918}
~~Sat. Aug. 24, 1918~~

Dear Father & Mother:

I am well and in the best of health and spirits. Had almost 9 hours' sleep yesterday, and am quite rested up after the long 21 hours' train ride. The ride went all right till midnight, when we pulled out of Cumberland, Md. I tried to get some sleep after that, but this was impossible while sitting on a hard seat (which we had already sat for 8 hours,) and the train rocking like a boat. They gave us our dinner and breakfast on the train, but it did not amount to much; some of it I ate and some of it I didn't, but I wasn't hungry, for I had enough with me from Pittsburgh, so much that I threw some of it away the next morning because it was beginning to smell.

All along the way, from the time we left Pittsburgh till we arrived at camp, the people gave us a royal and cheer-rousing send-off. The country, all along the route, was very beautiful, the South especially. Corn fields and corn fields and corn fields down South. Miles & miles & miles of them. If not corn fields it was woods & timber lands with many, many pine trees & beautiful woods. Really, the trip was very enjoyable outside of being all broken up and I tired out after a long sleepless night.

We arrived at Camp 1 P.M. Friday, the southern sun burning as hotly as it could. We all got in line, and a commissioned officer (over)

To the Writer: Save by Writing on Both Sides of this Paper.

To the Folks at Home: Save Food, Buy Liberty Bonds and War Savings Stamps.

chucked us up to see that we were all here. After that we got in line according to how tall we were, the tallest first and the shorter men after. The commissioned officer (a second lieutenant) then picked out one man for each eight to look after the seven men under him, this man being called a Squad Leader, this leader getting this duty according to his education and occupation. When he came down to where I was, he asked: "any college men here" and I raised my hand. He asked me what college I attended, and I said "Pitt." He then made me Squad leader for my group, seven men and myself. He then asked me what my occupation was, and when I told him that I was a government stenographer, he immediately told the non-commissioned officer (a sergeant) to take my name. So you see, my dear parents, I made a good start off just as soon as I got there, and just as soon as it was possible. We were then led to our "bunks" or beds, where we left our grips and went out to get our supplies. They gave us a spoon, fork, knife, small pan with a lid to fit, and a large cup. all this is made of aluminum, and is all the eating "tools" we get. It is up to us to keep it clean, for we use the same one's three times a day and we don't get any more neither. They also gave us a cake of soap, and a towel which I am using to wipe the dishes. For our sleeping apparatus they gave us two blankets and a linen sheet which we stuffed up with straw for our mattress. For our clothes they gave us a pair of blue overalls and a jacket. We are using our own underwear at present.



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When we got back from the place where we got our clothes we were all given a bath. Some bath. We were under the shower ^{just} long enough to get wet, not more than about one minute, and then they gave us about half a minute to dry ourselves. But this was better than nothing, for we surely did need a bath. After the bath we went for "mops" (supper) as they call it. The eats are pretty good. They certainly give you enough so that you don't get hungry. I am eating anything and everything. I don't know half what I'm eating, but I do know that most of the food is good. By the time they fed us and showed us how to make up our beds, it was time to go to bed. At 9 P.M. all lights are out, and while you are supposed to go to bed, if you don't feel like it you can go a little later, but most of the boys go to bed at 9, even sooner, for you must get up at 5:45. I had over 8 hours' sleep that night and got up Saturday morning fresh and all rested up, ready for the hard days work which was ahead of us. The first day I was there (Friday) they put us in quarantine and we are not allowed to go very far. I tried to get in touch with some of the men to whom I have letters of introduction, but as we were not allowed to go out of our territory, I was unable to do so. I did, however, get in touch with the office of one man by telephone. He wasn't in, so I gave the party who answered the phone my name, and where

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he could find me, and told him to look me up.

The next morning we were all up at a quarter to six and they gave us just enough time to dress while rushing ourselves. They then took us out on the field for revellie. (To hear the bugle call.) Here they showed us different military drills and had us do them for about half an hour. We then got back to our bunks (beds) and after washing up a little got our eating "tools" (the same ones which we use for every meal) and got our breakfast. They do certainly give you enough to eat, and ^{almost} everything is good. After breakfast they took us out some more to drill, and then we got back to our bunks (beds.) (These bunks are our whole house. Everything we own are either on top of them or under them.) We then fixed our bunks up for the inspection of an officer. We then waited for further instructions. While waiting, a sergeant came into the room and called out if Levine was here. I responded, and he asked me to go with him, all the other men here looking at me in a very jealous way. He took me across the fields to officers' Headquarters ~~where~~ ^{to} the naturalization department building, and there I met the party who asked for me, Mr. Cocke, the naturalization examiner at Camp Lee. I had quite a long talk with him, and it was interesting from beginning to end. He is just a plain man, and it sounded very good, for it was the first plain man I spoke to since I left Pittsburgh. He was just as glad to see me as I was to see him, and his intentions are to have me detail the work in the naturalization office and write some letters for him, provided, of course, he can get me. You see, I will not be mustered into the service for



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about a week, and will be in quarantine for two weeks ¹⁹¹. He thinks he can get me out of quarantine, but he doesn't know whether he can get me before I am mustered in. He received all the letters I wrote from Pittsburgh to him and about him. He says he showed one of these letters to the head office of the camp, and now he is mighty sorry he did, for he says they picked their ears up and acted as though they themselves were going to use me instead of himself. I will write you when anything develops.

When I returned all of the men were out for mess (lunch) so I did the same. It tasted pretty good, except the meat was too tough and too old. I could hardly cut it with my knife.

After dinner we went out to get some hay to stuff our mattresses up and when we got back we drilled some more. I then took a good shower bath and changed my underclothing. We then went to eat mess (supper). It seems that all one does here is eat, eat, eat. No wonder they fatten you up so. Even if I am not so hungry, just as soon as I smell the food I get hungry anyhow.

(over)

Today is Sunday; and we are relieved from drilling. all we do is rest and eat three meals again. I thought we would have half a days rest yesterday, (Saturday) but we didn't. That's why I couldn't write any sooner.

You notice the date on the letter. I started it last evening (Saturday) as soon as the lights were turned on, but before I could finish it the lights went off and we had to go to bed. Today, (Sunday), we got up a half hour later (6:15) and formed in line for reveille. (to hear the bugle call.) That's all we did up till 2 P.M. the ~~minute~~^{time} I am writing; and that's all we expect to do so far as I know, outside of eating again. (supper).

Last night Edel and Nathan Roth and the other boys here from Pittsburgh were up to see me, and they will give you a regard. About a half hour ago I saw Mr. Pittler, and he will also give you a regard. I gave Mr. Pittler my watch to give to you. It is broken, and I don't know what the trouble may be. I wore it up to Friday about 4 P.M. when I put it in my suitcase, and when I took it out again it wouldn't work. Have Alie take it down to the place he got it. I think they will fix it free of charge. If they don't, you fix it and pay for it. Keep it home till I write for it for I do not know whether I will stay where I am now, or not, and I wouldn't want it to get lost in the mail. I am very anxious



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to hear some news of home, but I do not want you to send anything, not even a letter, till I know where I will be. 191

I was just interrupted in my letter. Edel Rubenstein and the others were here to bid me good-bye. A boy by the name of Eisner, who is also stationed with me also saw him. This boy Eisner is a Pittsburgh boy, and he knows our people. He says father knows him.

It is quite hot down here in the daytime, but kind of chilly at nights. It rains here quite often. Out of the three days that I have been here it has rained two days. It doesn't rain little by little, but it comes down in buckets. After a while it stops raining and the sun comes out as hot as ever.

Well mother + father, I must now end my letter. I have been here only a short while, but I know enough to write a book. You may get tired reading even as much as I have already written. I wrote as small as I could, and there is quite a bit on these eight pages. I am anxious

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to know how Frank is; how is Minnie and Eva and Nathan and little Minnie; but don't write yet for the reasons explained before. Nathan also knows this fellow Eisner for he worked in the Keystone Drygoods Co. on 5th Ave., and he sends his regards.

Give my regards to everybody home. I won't mention anyone in particular as I want you to regard everyone. Tell them that just as soon as I get settled I will write them all.

I suppose Frank can read and explain this letter, but if he can't let Minnie read it to you. I tried to make it just as simple as I can. At any rate, I wouldn't want anyone else to read any of the letters I write you, as there may be something which they should not know. If they want to know what I write, you may tell them anything I write that they should know, but not to read the letters. Then again, I would thank you to keep these letters I write. Put them away where they won't get lost or destroyed, so that when I get back they will be a sort of remembrance.

Don't worry my dear parents. I am feeling fine and I really like it so far. Best luck and wishes to all. Good-Bye!

Your loving son

Meyer

P.S. Will write just as soon as I can. If anything of importance develops I will drop you a card for it doesn't take so long to write.